

Message Text

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SUB: ANNOUNCEMENT ON CLOSURE OF AFRTS

REF: STATE 166886

1. ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHANGEOVER MADE EVENING JULY 5 ON ALL BROADCAST MEDIA, INCLUDING AFRTS, AND IN ALL PRINT MEDIA JULY 6. ANNOUNCEMENTS ALSO PROVIDED REPRESENTATIVES OF AMERICAN PRESS. FOLLOWING ARE THE TWO STATEMENTS WHICH WERE RELEASED AND FROM WHICH MEDIA REPORTS WERE DRAWN. FIRST ITEM (PARA 2) WAS DRAFTED BY NIRT. SECOND STATEMENT (PARA 3) WAS NIRT RE-DRAFT OF RELEASE PREPARED BY MISSION BUT INCORPORATED ALL POINTS MISSION WISHED TO MAKE.

2. STATEMENT BY NATIONAL IRANIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION: CONSIDERING THE FACT THAT: BROADCASTING ACTIVITY IN IRAN IS LEGALLY THE MONOPOLY OF NATIONAL IRANIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION, AND DUE TO THE FACT THAT NIRT INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS ARE BEING BROADCAST SUCCESSFULLY IN TEHRAN AND SOME PROVINCIAL CENTERS FOR FOREIGNERS RESIDING IN IRAN, AND NOW THAT THE RAPID EXPANSION OF INDUSTRY IN THE COUNTRY REQUIRES EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN EXPERTS AND TECHNICIANS BOTH IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS MORE THAN BEFORE, NIRT FEELS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROVIDING ENTERTAINMENT, NEWS, CURRENT AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION ABOUT IRANIAN CULTURE FOR THE NON-PERSIAN RESIDENTS IN THE COUNTRY. THEREFORE, NATIONAL IRANIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION, WHILE EXPRESSING ITS APPRECIATION TO AMERICAN FORCES

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RADIO AND TELEVISION IN TEHRAN, WHICH HAS UNTIL NOW PROVIDED THE

NEEDED SERVICE, AND DUE TO THE FACT THAT NIRT IS NOW WELL EQUIPED TO PROVIDE AND BROADCAST SUCH PROGRAMS, NIRT WILL PREPARE AND BROADCAST SUCH PROGRAMS FROM OCTOBER, 1976 BY EXPANDING ITS INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION BROADCASTING TO APPROXIMATELY TEN HOURS PER DAY, AND ALSO WILL INITIATE INTERNATIONAL RADIO BROADCASTING OF ABOUT 20 HOURS PER DAY. THESE PROGRAMS WILL NOT BE BROADCAST ONLY FOR TEHRAN, BUT GRADUALLY WILL BE EXTENDED TO CERTAIN PROVINCIAL CENTERS. ENGLISH WILL BE THE MAJOR LANGUAGE OF THESE PROGRAMS. CERTAIN PROGRAMS AND SOME NEWS BULLETINS ALSO WILL BE BROADCAST IN OTHER FOREIGN LANGUAGES, INCLUDING FRENCH AND GERMAN. TELEVISION BROADCASTING WILL BE ON CHANNEL 5 (THOSE WITH TELEVISION SETS OF 525 SCAN LINES WILL BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING ON CHANNEL 7 BY INSTALLING A CONVERTOR ON THEIR RECEIVERS) THE FREQUENCY FOR THE NEW INTERNATIONAL RADIO BROADCASTING WILL BE ANNOUNCED LATER. WHEN THE EXPANDED NIRT INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION AND THE NEW INTERNATIONAL RADIO BEGIN IN OCTOBER, AMERICAN FORCES RADIO AND TELEVISION WILL CEASE OPERATIONS.

3. NIRT EXPANDING FOREIGN LANGUAGES BROADCASTING SERVICES: FOLLOWING THE STATEMENT ISSUED TODAY BY NATIONAL IRANIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION ON THE EXPANSION OF ITS INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE BY SPOKESMEN FOR NIRT AND THE AMERICAN FORCES RADIO AND TELEVISION SERVICES IN TEHRAN: THE NIRT SPOKESMAN SAID THE LANGUAGE OF THE INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING MAINLY WILL BE ENGLISH. HE SAID THAT SURVEYS REVEALED THAT THE MAJORITY OF FOREIGN RESIDENTS IN IRAN ARE EITHER ENGLISH SPEAKING OR ARE ACQUAINTED WITH THE LANGUAGE. HOWEVER, HE POINTED OUT, A NUMBER OF THE PROGRAMS AND SOME NEWS BROADCASTS EACH WEEK ALSO WILL BE IN OTHER FOREIGN LANGUAGES, INCLUDING FRENCH AND GERMAN. THE TV BROADCASTS WILL NOT BE LIMITED TO TEHRAN. THE FULL TEN HOURS SCHEDULE WILL BE SEEN IN ISFAHAN AND THREE OF THE TEN HOURS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN SHIRAZ AND ABADAN. RADIO BROADCASTING WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM OCTOBER IN ISFAHAN ON FREQUENCY MODULATION (FM) AND LATER WILL BE EXTENDED TO OTHER PROVINCIAL CITIES. THE AMERICAN SPOKESMAN SAID THAT IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH AMERICAN REGULATIONS, WHICH PROHIBIT AMERICAN FORCES BROADCASTING WHERE IT WOULD BE IN COMPETITION WITH OTHER ENGLISH LANGUAGE BROADCASTING, THE AFRTS BROADCASTING WILL GO OFF THE AIR IN OCTOBER WHEN NIRT'S EXPANDED TV AND NEW RADIO PROGRAMMING BEGINS.

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THE NIRT SPOKESMAN, WHILE EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO AFRTS IN TEHRAN, STATED THAT UNDER IRANIAN LAW ALL BROADCASTING WITHIN THE COUNTRY IS THE MONOPOLY OF NATIONAL IRANIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION. HE EXPLAINED THAT WHEN NIRT EXPANDED ITS RADIO AND TELEVISION NETWORKS, NEW BROADCASTING POTENTIALS AROSE AND IT DECIDED TO LAUNCH ITS INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMING. NIRT NOW HAS THE CAPABILITY TO DEVELOP AND BROADCAST SUCH PROGRAMMING TO SERVE NON-PERSIAN SPEAKING AUDIENCES IN IRAN, THE SPOKESMAN ADDED. THE NIRT SPOKESMAN

EMPHASIZED THE APPRECIATION OF HIS COLLEAGUES TO AMERICAN FORCES RADIO AND TELEVISION SERVICE FOR THE QUALITY OF THE SERVICES AND PROGRAMS IT HAS PROVIDED FOR THE ENGLISH SPEAKING PEOPLE OF TEHRAN. HE ADDED THAT "WE WILL BENEFIT FROM AFRTS' EXPERIENCES IN OUR BROADCAST PLANNING." HE NOTED THAT AFRTS' PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN WELL SUITED TO THE TASTES OF THE STATION'S AUDIENCES AND THAT NIRT PLANS TO ACQUIRE MATERIALS FROM THE SAME FOREIGN SOURCES AND THUS BE ABLE TO PROVIDE MANY OF THE SAME PROGRAMS THAT AFRTS' LISTENERS AND VIEWER

S HAVE BEEN RECEIVING. "IN ADDITION," HE SAID, "WE WILL, IN THE FUTURE, BROADCAST PROGRAMS ON IRANIAN CULTURE, LITERATURE AND OTHER INFORMATION WHICH WILL BE USEFUL TO FOREIGN RESIDENTS IN IRAN. OUR PROGRAMS ALSO WILL INCLUDE INFORMATION ON SCHOOLS, MUSEUMS, HISTORICAL MONUMENTS AND THE ACTIVITIES OF THE VARIOUS CULTURAL SOCIETIES IN IRAN." THE NIRT SPOKESMAN SAID TELEVISION BROADCASTING WILL BE ON CHANNEL FIVE AT 625 SCAN LINES (THE SYSTEM ON WHICH NIRT'S FIRST AND SECOND PROGRAMS ARE CURRENTLY BEING BROADCAST.) TELEVISION RECEIVERS OF 525 SCAN LINES WILL BE ABLE TO RECEIVE INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION BROADCASTING ON CHANNEL SEVEN BY INSTALLING A CONVERTER ON THEIR SETS. OWNERS OF 525 SCAN LINE RECEIVERS CAN OBTAIN THE CONVERTERS IN TEHRAN AND HAVE THEM INSTALLED AT NOMINAL COST, THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT.

4. REACTION TO DATE CONSIDERABLY MORE MUTED THAN MISSION HAD ANTICIPATED. A FEW AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN MENTIONED TO EMB OFF THAT "OUR MAIN SOURCE OF ENTERTAINMENT BEING TAKEN AWAY." HOWEVER, MOST RESERVING JUDGEMENT UNTIL THEY CAN ASCERTAIN QUALITY NIRT PROGRAMMING AND CONCEDE THAT IT MIGHT BE AN IMPROVEMENT OVER AFRTS. SOME IRANIANS ALSO HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN, PARTICULARLY OVER LOSS OF AFRTS RADIO WITH REGULAR NEWS BROADCASTS. IN ALL LIKELIHOOD AFRTS RADIO SCHEDULE TO BE CLOSELY MIRRORED BY NIRT.

5. FYI: PROBABLE CHANGEOVER DATE WILL BE OCTOBER 9. HOWEVER,
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NIRT ENGINEERING STAFF CURRENTLY HOLDING OUT FOR OCTOBER 26 IN ORDER TO BE SURE OF MAXIMUM PREPARATION TIME. NIRT DID NOT ANNOUNCE FREQUENCY FOR NEW RADIO PROGRAMMING, WHICH ORIGINALLY HAD BEEN SLATED FOR FREQUENCY NOW USED BY AFRTS RADIO BECAUSE, ACCORDING NIRT OFFICIALS, IT SEEKING FREQUENCY WHICH WILL AFFORD MAXIMUM POWER.

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